

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 004043

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/06/2015

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [EAI](#) [EIND](#) [ECON](#) [FR](#) [IZ](#) [EUN](#)

SUBJECT: DELIVERABLES FOR U.S.-EU IRAQ CONFERENCE: NO NEW
GOF AID, GOF AWAITING IRAQI RESPONSE ON POLICE TRAINING

REF: A. STATE 103222

1B. PARIS 3401

Classified By: Political Minister-Counselor Josiah Rosenblatt, reasons
1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Summary and comment: The GoF will not be announcing new assistance for Iraq at the June 22 U.S.-EU conference, which FM Douste-Blazy is likely to attend. MFA officials responded somewhat defensively to our points encouraging additional French support for Iraq, and stressed that the Brussels meeting was not intended to be a pledging conference. MFA officials confirmed the GoF is waiting for a response from the Iraqi Transitional Government (ITG) on its offer to train some 1500 Iraqi gendarmes in France, and sought U.S. help in encouraging the ITG to be more responsive. MFA officials blamed continued legal obstacles for delaying transfer of frozen Iraqi assets to the ITG, and emphasized that the French Ministry of Finance was working on draft legislation to remedy the problem. MFA officials stressed a desire to consult on the draft conference statement prior to the June 21 senior officials' meeting in Brussels, and criticized the Luxembourg EU Presidency for lack of information sharing. End summary and comment.

12. (C) We discussed deliverables for the U.S.-EU international conference on Iraq with MFA DAS-equivalent for Iraq/Iran/Arabian Gulf Affairs Antoine Sivan and MFA Iraq desk officer Renaud Salins June 7, after conveying ref (a) points to the MFA June 3. Sivan confirmed that newly-appointed French FM Philippe Douste-Blazy was likely to lead the French delegation to Brussels, and that he was awaiting confirmation of this from the minister's staff. Douste-Blazy will be accompanied to Brussels by French NEA A/S-equivalent Jean-Francois Thibault, Sivan, and possibly MFA Political Director Stanislas de Laboulaye, in addition to working level MFA officials.

13. (C) While Sivan stressed GoF eagerness to attend the Brussels conference and help make it a success, he responded negatively to the France-specific points of our message (ref a), and questioned whether our emphasis on seeking more French assistance for Iraq was consistent with earlier U.S. assurances that the Brussels meeting would not be a pledging conference. Poloff reiterated that the Brussels meeting was not a donors' pledging conference, and the U.S. looked forward to working with France and other EU members to ensure a successful outcome. Nevertheless, with Iraqi authorities expected to present their national priorities on Iraq's political transition, economic reconstruction, and public order/rule of law efforts at the Brussels gathering, announcements of such support by conference participants could help build new momentum and demonstrate a new international partnership in place. Poloff added that the U.S. was not singling out the GoF in our approach, and that the USG was approaching nearly all the participants at the Brussels conference to encourage tangible support for Iraq. Sivan appeared reassured by the latter point, and sought confirmation that countries which had not disbursed pledges at Madrid were being encouraged to do so as well.

14. (C) Both Sivan and Salins downplayed prospects for French bilateral financial assistance for Iraq via the IRFFI. Salins asserted that new financial contributions to Iraq were not essential, since significant portions of existing U.S., EU and other international pledges for Iraq still needed to be disbursed. When poloff asked specifically how much the GoF was giving Iraq bilaterally, Salins at first was reluctant to reveal the figure, then conceded that it amounted to some 2.5 million euros in 2005 -- a figure which he described as minuscule in comparison to U.S. assistance, but which represented a three-fold increase over French assistance to Iraq in 2004.

15. (C) On the French offer to train Iraqi police in France, Salins reported that the GoF was still waiting for the ITG to send a planning delegation to France. Salins stressed that the ITG had a standing offer to train up to 1500 Iraqi police at various gendarme and police training schools in France, on issues as varied as criminal investigations, customs collection, border control or counterterrorism -- it was up to the ITG to present its top priority needs to the GoF. French gendarme training schools, he added, were well-accustomed to welcoming foreign trainees, and already

had Arabic interpretation services in place. The GoF envisioned that training modules could be for small groups of students and two to three weeks in length; in order to place students in courses starting in fall 2005, the ITG needed to send a delegation to France by late June or early July to work out logistical details. Since we had last discussed the training offer in May (ref b), Salins said minimal progress had been made. The ITG had asked the GoF how many people it should send to discuss the training offer; the GoF had clarified that a week-long visit by a small delegation of three to five Ministry of Interior (MOI) officials with decisionmaking authority would be appropriate, and offered to cover travel costs. Sivan and Salins asked for U.S. help in encouraging the ITG to be responsive to the GoF offer and send the MOI delegation to France in coming weeks.

16. (C) On frozen Iraqi assets, Sivan stressed the complexity of the issue and that the GoF continued to lack the necessary legal authority to transfer the remaining 10 million USD in Iraqi assets to the ITG. He added that Ministry of Finance officials were working on a draft law which would resolve the issue, which remained a legal problem, not a matter of political will. The new law would need to stand up to review from the French Council of State (France's highest administrative court) as well as sustain possible legal challenges. He described French law on confiscation of assets and property as more rigid than that of other EU members, and noted such laws were enacted during the post-war period to prevent a repeat of the wrongful confiscation of assets belonging to French Jews during Nazi occupation. Iraq deskoff Salins added that the GoF had transferred all the accounts and property belonging to the former Iraqi embassy to the ITG, however transfer of assets in the name of Saddam Hussein and other former regime figures required adoption of new legislation. Poloff stressed the urgency of the issue, which we had been discussing with the GoF since 2003.

17. (C) Summing up, Sivan stressed the GoF desire to be constructive at the June 22 conference and appealed for greater consultation in advance on the conference communique. He expressed hope that the issue was not left until the June 21 senior officials meeting for resolution, and criticized the Luxembourg EU Presidency for not keeping other EU members adequately informed of conference planning. He quipped that the Luxembourg EU Presidency already appeared worn out by the conference arrangements before the event had even taken place. Sivan conceded that the GoF had received from the EU presidency draft texts of the U.S. and EU proposed statements for the gathering; the GoF had only a few minor quibbles with the U.S. draft, such as seeking more prominent mention of UNSCR 1546 and toning down references to insurgents.

18. (C) Comment: The GoF remains opinion-rich and resource-shy when it comes to Iraq, and does not like being reminded of this uncomfortable reality. We will continue to press the GoF to be more forthcoming in offering tangible support for the ITG, but for the time being, the most we might hope for is for the French to implement existing training offers and transfer long-frozen assets to the ITG. End comment.

WOLFF